

Remarks

This communication is in response to the non-final office action mailed on February 8, 2010 rejecting claims 1-4, 6-12, and 14-19.

Confirmation of Provisional Telephonic Election

The applicant's representative affirms the election of the Examiner-identified "Invention I" encompassed by claims 1-12 for prosecution on the merits without traverse as provisionally elected in the telephonic conference with the examiner on January 28, 2010.

Thus, claims 14-19 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1-12 remain pending of the application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1-2, 6-7, 9-10, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Jangaard, U.S. Pat. No. 5,472,123 ("Jangaard").

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as anticipated over Jangaard in view of Boedecker, US patent number 3,865,900 ("Boedecker").

Claims 3-4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. section 103 as unpatentable over Boedecker in view of Morone, US patent number 5,027,754 ("Morone").

Claim 5 is allowed, which is noted with appreciation. The office action states at page 10 the reason for the allowable subject matter is that "the limitations of 'a hook-shaped section' are not anticipated or made obvious by the prior art of record." The guidance provided by the Examiner is noted with appreciation.

With this response, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a portion of the allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner and now recites the connecting portion including a hook-shaped engagement section formed integrally with the valve element for engagement with said retaining means, the valve element projecting a coherent plane.

Claims 2-4 and 6-11 further define patently distinct amended independent claim 1.

With this response, independent claim 12 has been amended to recite a portion of the allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner and now recites the connecting portion

including a hook-shaped engagement section integrally formed in the valve element, and the valve element projects a coherent plane.

All of the pending claims now recite limitations indicated in the office action to be patentable over the prior art of record. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejections to claims be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully asserts that pending claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance and notice of the same is requested.

The Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned if issues remain outstanding.

No fees are believed due at this time. However, the office is authorized to charge any fees actually due and credit any overpayment to deposit account 50-4439.

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Respectfully submitted,
Kaern

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